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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 CHISINAU 001283

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/22/2017  
TAGS: [OSCE](#) [PBTS](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [MD](#)  
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER STRATAN SUPPORTS US ON  
TRANSNISTRIA, CFE AND OSCE

REF: CHISINAU 1273

Classified By: Ambassador Michael D. Kirby under 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: EUR DAS David Kramer's October 19 meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Andrei Stratan won willing support on U.S. positions regarding Transnistria (TN), CFE and the OSCE. Stratan expressed his appreciation for U.S. transparency on talks with Russia and for our support of Moldova's EU aspirations. Stratan wants to sign the border treaty with Romania. He cited domestic problems hindering troop increases in Iraq and an Article 98 signature. End summary.

¶2. (C) DAS Kramer expressed to Moldovan Foreign Minister Andrei Stratan his cautious optimism that the Russians might consider a three-part package proposal to solve Transnistria and CFE (ref A); predicted a more active OSCE with Finland in the chair; solicited and received support for U.S. candidate Philip Remler proposed to replace Louis O'Neill as OSCE chief in Moldova; noted that Ukraine will continue to support Moldova on EUBAM and the Transnistria issue; urged signing of the "95% there" border treaty with Romania; pressed Moldova to advertise itself better; and requested more troops for Iraq and Moldova's Article 98 signature. He also noted that President Voronin, whom he had met earlier in the day, was decidedly less optimistic about Putin's desire to solve the Transnistrian issue than he had been earlier this year. Stratan interjected occasional questions for clarification, appreciated U.S. transparency on our negotiations with Russia, and agreed with almost all our points, while expressing qualms about Parliament's reaction to the troop request, and EU reactions to an Article 98 signing. His longest statements were complaints about Romania and the EU.

Solving CFE: 5 plus 2, Weapons Removal, and Civilian PKF  
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¶3. (C) DAS Kramer noted that last week's meetings in Moscow were more positive and constructive than they were described in the media. Stratan expressed his keen interest in the three-part plan to avert Russia's withdrawal from CFE on December 12, and bypass Russia's intransigence on Istanbul commitments. The plan consists of getting the Russians to commit to serious 5 plus 2 talks, and thus prepare for progress on weapons destruction (on site, joked Kramer, to solve Russian worries about women and children blocking the railway tracks at Colbasna), and replacement of peace keepers with an international civilian force, to include Russians. Success in these efforts could lead to demilitarization (which would solve the tricky issue of command and control that would come with an internationalized peacekeeping force) and a Russian withdrawal.

14. (C) Stratan eagerly asked whether the Russians had agreed, but accepted DAS Kramer's evaluation that they were at least interested. Stratan appreciated even more DAS Kramer's statement that the day's meetings with GOM officials were part of USG efforts to brief Moldova and solicit reactions. DAS Kramer noted that A/S Fried expected to meet Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak in Moscow next week, and that he and Ambassador Kirby would attend the OSCE conference in Odessa on October 23. DAS Kramer stressed the Russians had been told that the U.S. would consult Moldova and other countries before meeting the Russians again.

GOM OKs U.S. OSCE Candidate; Upcoming Finnish Chair  
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15. (C) On the OSCE, DAS Kramer noted that Ambassador Louis O'Neill would announce that day his November 16 departure. DAS Kramer suggested that O'Neill was too handicapped by his inability to travel to Moscow to stay on as head. DAS Kramer gave Stratan a brief CV of the proposed USG replacement for O'Neill, Phillip Remler, and received support from Stratan for his candidacy. Stratan agreed that a U.S. presence was vital; DAS Kramer noted the necessity of demonstrating to the Russians that they had not pushed the Americans out of the OSCE chief-of-mission position in Chisinau.

16. (C) DAS Kramer further noted that as present holders of the chairman-in-office position, the Spanish had been rather inactive and unhelpful. They had ignored O'Neill's request to extend the tour of the present OSCE Chisinau deputy head

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of mission, as a guarantee of continuity, and might drag their heels on U.S. requests to have Remler participate in the ministerials in Madrid next month. DAS Kramer noted that the Finns, who succeed the Spanish on January 1, were already active (their ambassador will visit Chisinau in early December), and, given their historical experience with the Russians, will be more effective.

Stratan Wants Romania Border Treaty, Complains about EU  
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17. (C) Romania remains a thorn in Stratan's side. He complained that he used to solve problems with Romania by getting on the telephone with his Romanian counterpart. Now, he said, the Romanians play the EU card and raise issues at EU fora. On the EU, he was more critical, noting that the EU Cooperation Commission had rejected Moldovan recommendations that commission hearings take place in public, with civil society in attendance. He nodded sadly when Ambassador Kirby pointed out that the U.S. had done more to open the door to the EU than had the EU itself. Further, he noted, the Commission had come to meetings unprepared, with outdated documents, and had, for example, ignored Moldovan proofs of improvements in its justice system. Moldova, he concluded, will continue its reforms with or without a new or extended EU cooperation agreement. On the positive side, he said, Romania and Moldova are 95% agreed on the wording of the border treaty, with only a few issues remaining. DAS Kramer and Ambassador Kirby strongly urged that Moldova sign the treaty, even if the political treaty has to wait, to maintain momentum, and to send a strong signal to the EU regarding Moldova's seriousness.

Ukraine will Continue to Help on EUBAM and Transnistria  
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18. (C) Stratan welcomed DAS Kramer's prediction that an Orange government would be formed in Ukraine, and that Ukraine would continue to contribute to the EU Border

Assistance Mission and to a solution of the Transnistrian conflict. DAS Kramer also noted that Ukraine needs to be more serious in its dealings with RosUkrEnergo, which he characterized as a corrupt, criminal organization. Likely PM candidate Yulia Tymoshenko, he noted, had said the rights things about the company, but now needed to take action to protect Ukraine's sovereignty and independence. Bluntly, he concluded that we want more competition with Gazprom, but "we want RosUkrEnergo out of business," as Stratan nodded in agreement.

#### Getting the Word Out: Op-eds and Voronin to Brussels

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¶9. (C) Stratan responded positively, as he has in previous meetings, to Moldova's need to present its case in an op-ed, under President Voronin's signature, in the international press, describing the justifications for Moldova's EU aspirations and eventual membership. DAS Kramer also noted that such efforts could help reduce the suspicions, and accusations of a sell-out, that arise whenever Voronin talks privately with Putin. Stratan agreed, and noted that Voronin hoped to meet the European Commission President and the head of the European Parliament in Brussels on December 4-5, to make just that case.

#### Iraq and Article 98

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¶10. (C) DAS Kramer thanked Stratan for Moldova's participation in Iraq, and noted the appropriateness of Central Command's offer to pay for two Moldovan officials to attend the Bahrain Coalition Conference at the end of October. He repeated USG requests for greater participation in Iraq, perhaps by adding security forces to the present demining contingent. DAS Kramer also repeated our long-standing request for Moldova's Article 98 signature. With some reluctance and seeming embarrassment, Stratan nodded when DAS Kramer said that President Voronin, at the day's first meeting, had raised Parliament's reluctance on the issue. On Article 98, Stratan attempted a joke about "inventing a new bicycle" to enable the country both to keep its promises to the U.S. and remain in compliance with EU rules.

¶11. (C) Comment: Visits to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration are always a positive experience for USG officials. MFA officials are pro-Western, enthusiastically cooperative (as far as

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domestic law and politics allow), and deeply appreciative of U.S. transparency and regular updates on our negotiations with Russia on Transnistria. While Stratan was not able to give a full commitment on Iraq and Article 98, we can be reasonably sure that Moldova will support our plans and efforts to resolve the Transnistria conflict. End Comment.  
LINDEN